HARAMBEE FLAME

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Our Interest In The "So. Africa" Question

All across the nation at this time, rallies, demonstrations, and other activities are taking place in an effort to pressure the U.S. government to cease supporting apartheid in Azania(South Africa). The people participating in these activities represent a broad cross-section of the U.S. population. But, of all the various groups involved, it is *Africans who have the greatest interest in the eventual outcome of these efforts. There is no question but that folks other than ourselves want to see justice come to Azania and Azanians rule their own land. But, for African folks in this country, the question of self-determination for the native people of Azania should be more than an ethical or moral issue. We should take it personal!

There is an interesting irony embodied in the acronym "U.S.A." in that it stands for both "United States of America" and "Union of South Africa." We African folks in America should understand and feel that irony, not as mere alphabetical coincidence, but as a set of profound political, social, and historical parallels between the two U.S.A.s.

The histories of the United States of America and the Union of South Africa began in the same way, with Europeans usurping power over lands inhabited by other people. Both nation's achieved their wealth through the enslavement of Africans --native Africans in the case of the Union of South Africa, imported Africans in the instance of the United States of America. In both countries, systems of social separation(Caucasian from African) were established, as well as a two-tiered

Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization Banquet

On the 26th. of May the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization held its annual banquet. The theme for this year's banquet was "Our African Connection." Ben Gray, host of "Kaleidoscope," was our guest speaker. He shared with us some information about important African figures in history, talked about the special problems faced by African journalists locally and in the U.S. in general, and spoke poignantly of his disappointment at seeing so many Africans leave the Nebraska State Prison and then return.

Our newly re-elected chairman, Ajabu, functioned as m.c. and also began the proceedings by welcoming the members and guests, reviewing the past few months, and expressing his hopes and aspirations for the organization over this next year. Sisters Sheba Jordan and Barbara Williams shared with us original writings of theirs on "Our African Connection." And George Stovall, an ACTSO participant, did both a dramatic presentation and an oratory on the importance of African people persevering.

H.A.C.O. members Balogun(Harold Davis) and Asa Carter were awarded with certificates of appreciation for attendance and participation at meetings. Also awarded were member Ezra Wright for participation in the organization outside of meetings; Buddy Hogan, president of the Omaha chapter of the N.A.A.C.P., for contributions to the needs of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization; and Ben Gray for contributions to the needs of the African community in Omaha. Buddy and Wilma and Ben and Aletha accepted the awards. We honor the beauty of their partnership

Our Interest...

political-rights framework in which African folks were on the bottom tier with no rights whatsoever. This system of separation and subjugation came to be known as "Apartheid" in the Union of South Africa and as "Jim Crow" in the United States of America.

Though U.S.A. #1 has erased "Jim Crow" from the books of official policy, U.S.A. #2 has maintained its apartheid. Even so, the maintenance in this nation of the subjugation of its African population has been accomplished without retention of an official policy mandating that subjugation. African people in America continue to be substantially under-represented in the labor force, government, and practically all other measuring sticks of "the good life." On the other hand, we are grossly over-represented in the areas of poverty, imprisonment, infant mortality rates, poor housing, etc.

Not only are the conditions of life for African people in U.S.A. #1 qualitatively the same as they are for African people in U.S.A. #2, but the governments of the two countries maintain a big brother-to-little brother relationship in which this nation gives economic, political, military, and para-military support to the South African government.

In view, then, of the special relationship between the two U.S.A.s and our relationship to the African continent (our foreparents having been kidnapped from there), we African people in this country have a special interest in what happens in Azania, not only with regard to apartheid(pronounced "apartate") but with regard to the more vital issue of self-determination for African people in Azania.

And while we should welcome the efforts of non-Africans in this country, we should be taking the lead in our communities to educate our people about the situation in Azania and to draw attention to the many parallels between that situation and ours here in America.

In this process of educating each other and attempting to bring pressure on the American government to stop supporting the South African regime, we have an opportunity and an obligation to establish an African consciousness among ourselves. For far too long, too many of us have been ignorant of our history and traditional values and have been veritable veritable robots otherwise, moving about and speaking from a program of American/Caucasian values and belief systems.

On the 16th. of this month there will be a commemoration of the 1976 Soweto Massacre. This will be held at the Central Park Mall at 3:00 and will follow a series of workshops on the 15th. at various locations. Sisters and Brothers involved in these activities should take pains to insure that the matter of our special interest in the South African question does not go neglected. And hopefully, in the near future, such activities will be held inside the African community.

*In this instance, "African" refers to those of us born and living in the United States. As a general policy, the FLAME draws no unnecessary and artificial distinctions between African people on the basis of where we happen to have been born. Incidentally, "Soweto," according to Sylvia Vollenhoven, is actually an acronym for "Southwestern Township."

The HARAMBEE FLAME is the monthly publication of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization at the Nebraska State Prison. Yearly subscriptions to the FLAME are $6.00. Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa(aka David Rice) is the editor. Your comments, articles, poetry, etc. are welcome. We also encourage you to attend our meetings. Our mailing address: Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization; P.O. Box 2500; Lincoln, NE.; 68502-0500. For subscriptions to the FLAME, copies of AFRICAN POETS IN NEBRASKA, H.A.C.O. Thought T-shirts, make money order payable to: "Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization."

From other sources:

Philadelphia vs. MOVE

Who are MOVE? "The MOVE family, as its 100 or so participants refer to themselves, all use Africa as a surname... MOVE members consider themselves revolutionary naturalists.

"The organization was founded in 1972 by Vincent Leapheart, now known as John Africa.

"John Africa taught MOVE members to reject modern technology, which he contended was destroying society. They wear braided dreadlocks, eat natural foods, including uncooked meat, and refuse to recognize any system of government, instead abiding solely by 'natural law.'

--Excerpted from an article by Akinshiju C. Ola on page 9 of the May 29 edition of THE GUARDIAN

Notes on the bombing of the MOVE house: "Police Commissioner Sambor insisted(and still insists) the bomb was fireproof: 'To say any serious potential for fire existed(in dropping a bomb onto interconnected row houses!) is, to my professional opinion, a non sequitor... I fail to see that a potential for fire correlates with what happened...'

"Dupont's own manual on TOVEX(a high-explosive from which the bomb was made) explains that the explosive throws out a heat wave that can range from 3000 to 7000 degrees fahrenheit."

--Excerpted from an article beginning on the front page of the May 20 edition of REVOLUTIONARY WORKER.

"After four days of sifting through MOVE compound ashes, police were forced to admit that they could find no heavy weaponry, but merely a rifle, two shotguns and three pistols...No matter, Police Commissioner Sambor merely continues to in-

(continued on page 5)

Uncle Toms in Azania

"In January 1984, for the first time since the ruling National party came into power in 1948, 'colored'(people of mixed descent) and 'Asian'(mostly Indian) representatives were elected to the central government...The coloreds and the Asians constitute, respectively, 8.9 percent and 2.8 percent of the population. Blacks, who constitute 73 percent of the population, are not represented at all.

"The colored and Indian members made their parliamentary debut in a heated debate about the laws that forbid sex and marriage between whites and non-whites....few people are actually affected by these statutes. Far more important discriminatory legislation is being ignored.

"For example, between 1974 and 1982, a total of 1,916 persons nationwide were prosecuted under the section of the Immorality Act that prohibits sexual relations across the color line, whereas in 1982 alone there were 206,022 arrests for pass law offenses, or one every 2.5 minutes.

"However, not only the colored and Indian MPs(members of parliament) are prepared to be marionettes in this political road show...In fact, he(the Black mayor of Soweto) approves of the government's policy of separate development for the different race groups, even if separate does not mean equal. As decreed by a white cabinet minister, Soweto-on the outskirts of Johannesburg -and other black cities and townships have community councils, which have limited powers. The residents a re allowed to elect the mayors and their councils, but most people in these urban areas either have not registered or boycott the elections out of protest.

"What of the violence that constantly threatens the collaborators of apartheid? Since the beginning of 1984 at least seven Soweto councillors have been killed. One of the dead men had just been named mayor-elect of Soweto when he was am-

From other sources:

Infant Mortality

"Four years ago, the federal government declared that it would take measures to reduce the death rates of Black infants to 12 per 1000 live births by 1990, close to the current white infant mortality rate of 10.1. But this spring, Secretary of Health and Human Services Margaret Heckler admitted it was 'doubtful' that this goal would be reached. In 1982, the Black infant mortality rate stood at 19.6 per thousand, and any hope for lowering this figure to even 13 or 14 for each 1000 by 1990 is slim at best.

"According to Howard University professor Allan Johnson, the new study's principal investigator, 'high infant mortality rates among blacks' are directly tied to 'inadequate health care, poor diet and a high incidence of adolescent pregnancy.' Poor prenatal diets and health habits may also have an impact on 'the intellectual development' of Black children, he adds."

--Excerpted from an article by Manning Marable on page 2 of the May 22 edition of THE GUARDIAN

Uncle Toms...

bushed and shot gangland-style.

"There is no single reason why blacks choose to be secondhand oppressors... The common denominator is that they play the game for gain--not necessarily now, but in the future, when the real change comes.

"With a declining economy, they are hanging in there for a stake in what will be left of the riches. In the meantime, they act as an important reactionary force for the government, a brake on the inevitable movement toward real political reform."

--Excerpted from an article by Sylvia Vollenhoven(an African reporter in Cape Town, South Africa) on page 8 of the July edition of MOTHER JONES.

Moratorium On Prison Violence Called For

At the recent MATA(Mexican Awareness Through Association) fiesta-and-seminar here at the prison, guest speaker Ruben Sandoval, an attorney from San Antonio, concluded his address by calling on the prisoners in attendance to bring in to being a moratorium on prisoner-on-prisoner violence. A key to achieving such a moratorium is a realization on the part of prisoners that mutual respect must be a priority in our relationships with each other. Below is a list of some things we can stop doing: cutting in front of each other in store and chow lines, doing our own time and a bunch of other folks time by playing our stereos and t.v.s so loud that other prisoners are forced to listen to whatever we are listening to, hollering back and forth to each other while other prisoners are talking on the phones, talking on the phones for an unreasonable amount of time while we know other prisoners are waiting to use them, playing sports(particularly basketball) in a manner so as to intentionally endanger the safety of other players, violating institutional rules in areas and under other circumstances so that our activities draw heat on others.

There are other things we do, and should stop doing, which cause friction among us. But if we start by beginning with the above, we can do a great deal to minimize hassles. However, it has to be recognized as well that one of the causes of prison violence is policies and practices of administrators and guards, as well as other employees, which serve to harass prisoners, violate our dignity, and often fill no positive or practical functions whatsoever.

In order for a moratorium on prisoner-on-prisoner violence to be effective, everyone's cooperation shall be required.

Bombing of MOVE House(cont.)

sist that not only automatic rifles but a fully mounted machine gun were in the building, pumping thousands of rounds of lead at his men."

--Excerpted from page 11 of the May 27 edition of REVOLUTIONARY WORKER.

Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization: In-House Notes

At the June 4th. general membership meeting, the Chairman's appointees for positions on the executive board were approved by the members. The new board now consists of Ajabu/Chairman(elected), Sgt.-At-Arms/Michael Sturgeon(elected), and the appointed members: Mondo/Education chairman, Balogun/Librarian, Hanee/Administrative chairman, Black Gold/Treasurer, Asa Carter/Secretary.

The education focus for the period from June through September will be on the history of Africa, from the ascent of the first humans up to the advent of the colonial period. This historical focus will be inclusive of important, political, social, cultural, religious, and scientific developments, ideas, events, and people. Inasmuch as we are seeking the assistance of our Sisters and Brothers on the outside in bringing this information to our members and guests, below is listed the dates for our meetings during this next quarter.

June	July	August	September
18/Tue.	2/Tue.	4/Sun.	1/Sun.
23/Sun.	7/Sun.	13/Tue.	10/Tue.
	16/Tue.	18/Sun.	15/Sun.
	21/Sun.	27/Tue.	24/Tue.
	30/Tue.		29/Sun.

All meetings are at 5:45. To contact us about attending, either write or call the institutional sponsor, Bill Huelsdonk, at 471-3161(ext. 380).

Announcements:

Women's Conference In Kenya

The World Conference for Women will be held at the Jomo Kenyatta Cultural Centre in Nairobi, Kenya July 10-26. The International Council of African Women will be a very viable force at this conference. ICAW is committed to facilitating the participation of women of African descent from around the world.

A primary focus will be famine, oppression, poverty and apartheid, with the development of task forces to address these issues. The militancy of women of color will infuse this world conference with political dynamics on topics such as forced sterilizations, monolingual education and services, confinement to low level jobs, ghettoized housing and community services, immigration deportations, and unequal access to and protection under the criminal justice system. A program of action concentrating on education, employment and health will be devised.

If you have concerns that need representation, please feel free to contact the International Council of African Women, P.O. Box 8676; Washington, D.C.; 20011; (202) 726-5985. Also contact the Council if you are interested in attending the conference and are seeking travel information.

Soweto Commemoration To Be Held

On Sunday, June 16 there will be a commemoration of the Soweto Massacre, which took place in 1976. This event will be held at the Central Park Mall at 13th. & Farnam in Omaha. The commemoration is being sponsored by the Omaha chapter of the N.A.A.C.P., Nebraska Rainbow Coalition, Africa Support Committee of Omaha, Muslim Community of Omaha, Nebraska chapter of the Socialist Party U.S.A., and other concerned groups.

POETRY

Brazen Belly

Will you look
at this
brazen
belly
telling everyone you're inside.

Little hitch-hiker,
it took a lot of good things
to get you this free ride.

Little passenger,
when you're ready,
laugh loud,
I'll help you through.
You should come out laughing, honey,
the way your mommy and daddy
loved making you.

Little hitch-hiker,
you would be one happy baby,
if you only knew
the way your mommy and daddy
enjoyed themselves making you.

--Lindamichellebaron(N.Y.)